

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Report

For the Community Development Committee meeting of November 15, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of December 8, 2021

Subject: Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District, Review File No. 50229-1

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve Three Rivers Park District's Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan.
2. Acknowledge Three Rivers Park District's intent to split the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor into two distinct but interconnected regional trails – the Eagle Lake Regional Trail and the Bryant Lake Regional Trail – which will be formally documented in the next update of the Regional Parks Policy Plan, anticipated in 2024.
3. Require Three Rivers Park District, prior to initiating any new development of the regional trail corridor, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst, and Chee Yang, Planner, presented the staff report to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission at its meeting on November 4, 2021. Kelly Grissman and Maggie Heurung, both with Three Rivers Park District, were in attendance and responded to questions.

Commissioner Peichel asked about the Park District's intent to split the trail corridor into two regional trails and if there are any potential negative impacts to funding. Heurung responded the split would result in the two trails having a stronger community identity connected with the regional park from which it takes its name. Grissman added that such a split should facilitate implementation and that it wouldn't threaten funding as each trail still meets the criteria for regional trails and will offer access to many community destinations.

Commissioner Harris asked for clarification on women being included as one of the underrepresented groups in the trail plan. Council Parks Manager Emmett Mullin responded that the Council's 2016 Regional Parks System Visitor Study indicates women are considered underrepresented on regional trails. Mullin added the results of the 2021 Visitor Study – anticipated next year – will offer new insights in this area.

Commissioner Dillenburg asked about the concerns expressed by some residents and how the trail corridor would be protected from potential encroachment. Heurung responded such concerns were focused on Baker Road in Minnetonka and that preliminary studies indicate the trail could be accommodated within the road right of way. She added the Park District is committed to working with those residents during the design phase. Grissman added the trail corridor will include signage that clearly denotes the trail boundary and if there are any issues with encroachment, the Park District will work with parties individually to resolve any issues.

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission voted unanimously to approve the proposed actions.

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: November 4, 2021

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For the Metropolitan Council meeting of December 8, 2021

Subject: Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District, Review File No. 50229-1

MPOSC District, Member: District A, Monica Dillenburg; District B, Robert Moeller

Council District, Member: District 1, Judy Johnson; District 3, Christopher Ferguson

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes § 473.313; *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*: Chapter 5, Planning Strategy 1

Staff Prepared/Presented: Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst (651-602-1361); Chee Yang, Parks Planner (651-602-1360)

Division/Department: Community Development/ Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

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2. Acknowledge Three Rivers Park District's intent to split the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor into two distinct but interconnected regional trails – the Eagle Lake Regional Trail and the Bryant Lake Regional Trail – which will be formally documented in the next update of the Regional Parks Policy Plan, anticipated in 2024.
3. Require Three Rivers Park District, prior to initiating any new development of the regional trail corridor, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

Background

The 17-mile Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail is a proposed trail in the western part of the Regional Parks System (Figure 1). The regional trail will create an important north-south trail connection from Eagle Lake Regional Park in Maple Grove to Bryant Lake Regional Park in Eden Prairie, Hennepin County (Figure 2).

Previously, portions of the proposed trail were a part of the "North-South 2" Regional Trail Search Corridor, and it was expanded as a result of the 2019-2020 system additions process and renamed "Eagle-Bryant Lake" in the subsequent Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment (December 2020).

Prior to the master planning process, Three Rivers Park District (Park District) completed the West Metro Regional Trail (WMRT) Study. The purpose of the WMRT Study was to provide initial guidance on preferred routes, probable costs, and implementation priorities, and to address important gaps in the regional trail network. The WMRT Study recommended the route for the Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake regional trails, and the Park District outlines plans for two distinct but interconnected regional trails (Figure 3) in the master plan submitted.

Because the current *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* identifies the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail as a single regional trail corridor, the two regional trails discussed in the master plan will be considered as major trail segments in this business item. However, to better reflect local geography, natural

resources, and destinations, the Park District has proposed to split the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor into two separate regional trails with distinct names: the Eagle Lake Regional Trail and the Bryant Lake Regional Trail. This approach is supported by local communities. Council staff will formalize this change during the next Regional Parks Policy Plan update, anticipated for 2024.

The approximately 12-mile Eagle Lake trail segment runs from Eagle Lake Regional Park in Maple Grove to the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail in Minnetonka. The approximately 5-mile Bryant Lake trail segment runs from the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail to the Bryant Lake Regional Park in Eden Prairie.

This regional trail corridor will connect to five other regional trails in the area including the Medicine Lake, Bassett Creek, Luce Line, Lake Minnetonka LRT, and Minnesota River Bluffs LRT regional trails, providing a more comprehensive trail network in the western metro and region, and creating a critical north-south connection. It will also provide direct connections to many local and regional destinations, job centers, parks and schools.

Rationale

The Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, particularly Planning Strategy 1 (Master plan requirements) and other Council policies as detailed in the Analysis section below.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan advances the Thrive outcome of Livability by increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, which enhances quality of life in the region.

Funding

The total estimated acquisition and development costs to complete proposed and upgrade existing Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail segments is \$13,175,000. This estimated total includes \$5,590,000 for the Eagle Lake trail segment and \$7,585,000 for the Bryant Lake trail segment.

When the regional trail corridor is fully developed, routine maintenance operational costs are estimated to increase by \$45,764/year. Additional costs for trail surface preservation and rehabilitation are anticipated to increase by \$57,443/year assuming a 30-year pavement life. The combined annual maintenance operational estimated cost for both route and trail surface preventative maintenance is \$103,207/year.

Known Support / Opposition

Resolutions or letters of support have been obtained from the cities of Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, and Plymouth (Attachments 1-3). The Park District has requested a resolution of support from the City of Maple Grove, but it has not yet been received. According to the Park District, Maple Grove parks staff has not been able to review or coordinate a time to bring the resolution of support to their City Council. Maple Grove has not communicated any opposition to the master plan, but only that they have not been able to internally coordinate with public works/engineering staff. The Park District received a support letter from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT, Attachment 4).

Some residents on Baker Road in Minnetonka expressed opposition to the regional trail due to the potential impact it may have on their properties. As a result, the Park District conducted additional targeted engagement with concerned residents and provided additional opportunities for residents to voice their concerns. Prior to trail development in this area, the Park District is committed to working with area residents to resolve any outstanding issues or concerns.

Figure 1: Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail location in the Regional Parks System

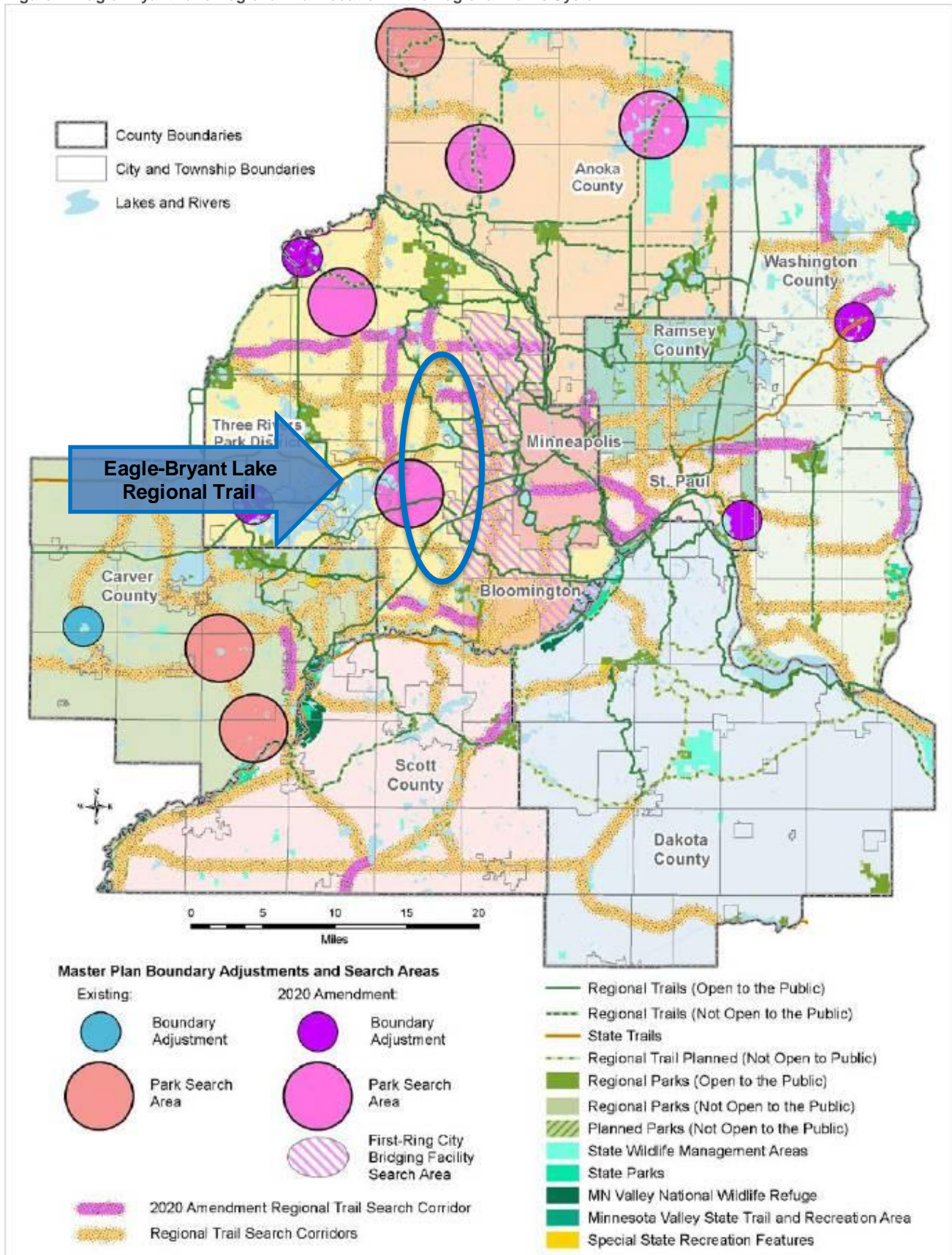


Figure 2: Regional Parks System, Hennepin County – Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail location

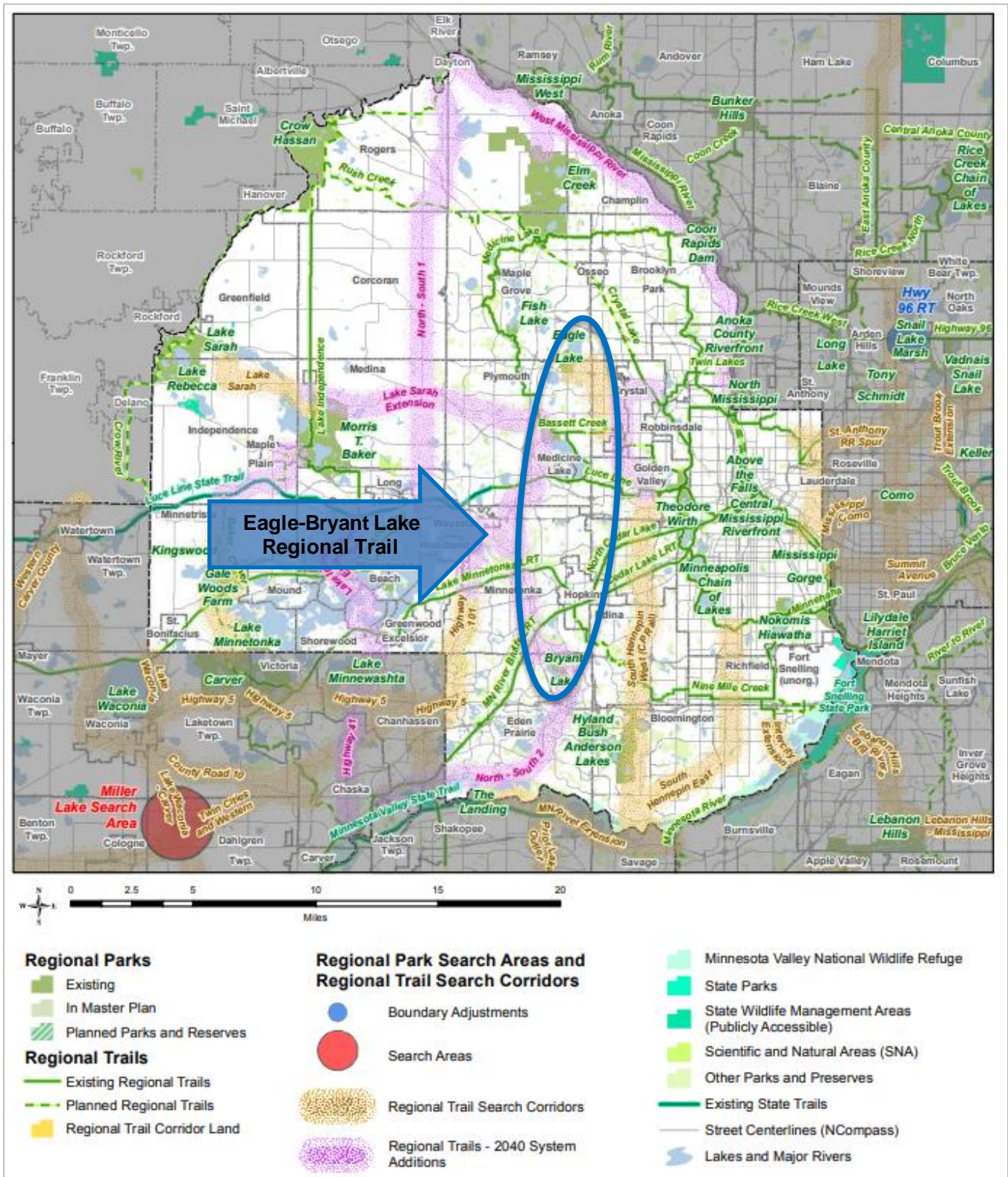


Figure 3: Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Planning Segments (MP Fig. 1)



Analysis

Planning Strategy 1 of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that master plans for regional linking trails address 13 items: boundaries, acquisition costs, demand forecast, development concept, conflicts, public services, operations, partner engagement, public engagement and participation, equity analysis, public awareness, accessibility, and Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. The following analyzes the master plan against those requirements.

Boundaries

The Eagle Lake trail segment consists of a combination of off-street trail adjacent to the roadway in public right-of-way, trail through publicly owned property in parks, and a short stretch of trail that will require fee-title acquisition or easement acquisition. This portion of the trail is primarily routed within right-of-way owned by the cities of Maple Grove and Plymouth, Hennepin County, or the Park District.

The Bryant Lake trail segment is also a combination of off-street trail adjacent to the roadway in public right-of-way and trail through publicly owned property in parks. The primary trail route is within right-of-way owned by the cities of Minnetonka and Eden Prairie, Hennepin County or the Park District.

Acquisition Costs

The Eagle Lake trail segment has one 0.4-mile subsegment along South Shore Drive in Plymouth that will require acquisition of an easement or of private property. Acquisition is estimated to be at least \$100,000. Acquisition costs could be reduced by obtaining right-of-way through land use development and/or road reconstruction projects. Property rights associated with the regional trail are anticipated to be transferred to the Park District prior to trail construction or operation and maintenance of existing segments.

There are no known properties that will require acquisition of easements or private property for the Bryant Lake trail segment.

Demand Forecast

According to the Metropolitan Council, the Twin Cities metropolitan area is projected to be home to over 3.7 million people by 2040, a gain of nearly 900,000 residents from 2010¹. By 2040, two in every five Twin Cities residents will be people of color. The region's Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities will more than double during the forecast period from 676,000 in 2010 to 1,448,000 in 2040. In contrast, the region's white population will level off in the late 2020s, and then decline slightly after 2030. BIPOC communities will become a greater share of our region's population growing from 24 percent in 2010 to nearly 40 percent in 2040.

Visitation to the Park District's regional trails is now estimated at 5.5 million visits per year (2019). The number of trail miles has grown from 56 miles (2009) to over 160 miles (2020). Use patterns within the Park District's system of parks and trails have also changed. More seniors are using the regional trails to get exercise and to get outdoors. Biking, as a form of transportation, has gained traction over the past five years throughout the metro region and more users are now bike commuting.

The Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail is anticipated to mirror Park District regional trail activity trends. The visitation estimate is calculated based on the most recent Park District visitation data. When fully constructed, the Eagle Lake trail segment is projected to generate 355,000 annual visits and the Bryant Lake trail segment is projected to generate 370,000 annual visits. The Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail is compared to the Luce Line Regional Trail which has similar recreational amenities and connections

¹ <https://metrocouncil.org/Data-and-Maps/Publications-And-Resources/MetroStats/Land-Use-and-Development/Twin-Cities-Forecasted-to-Reach-Four-Million-Resid.aspx>

to commercial areas. Park District studies indicate that 50 percent of regional trail users live within 1.5 miles from the trail and 75 percent of users live within 3.0 miles of the trail.

Development Concept

For planning purposes, the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail was broken into two major trail segments, the Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake trail segments. The overall regional trail corridor was also broken down into five segments (A through E, north to south) and each of these segments was further divided into subsegments. With few exceptions, information included on subsegments will be high level and primarily conceptual. Additional information is provided in those areas where there were concerns expressed by residents, such as in Segment D, along Baker Road.

Eagle Lake Trail Segment

The Eagle Lake trail segment is approximately 12.3-miles in length, starting at Eagle Lake Regional Park in Maple Grove and continuing south to Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail in Minnetonka. This segment has been further divided into three segments, A through C.

Segment A

Segment A is 1.1-miles long and is located entirely within the City of Maple Grove (Figure 4). The majority of Segment A is located on Park District property within the Eagle Lake Regional Park. The portion of the trail located outside of the park will connect to an existing municipal trail. Segment A consists of 0.7 miles of existing trails and 0.5 miles of planned trails.

- Subsegment A1 is an existing trail near the western border of Eagle Lake Regional Park. Short-term upgrades are recommended as opportunities arise, including signage, trailhead amenities, patching, sealcoating, improved driveway aprons, and tactile paving. Long term, this subsegment is recommended to be fully reconstructed, which is reflected in the cost estimate.
- Subsegment A2 is a planned trail located within Eagle Lake Regional Park. The final recommendation for Subsegment A2 will be determined through a new master plan for Eagle Lake Regional Park.
- Subsegment A3 is an existing trail located within the Eagle Lake Regional Park. Limited short-term upgrades are needed for Subsegment A3 as this section of the trail will use existing boardwalk and trail.

Figure 4: Segment A (MP Map 6)

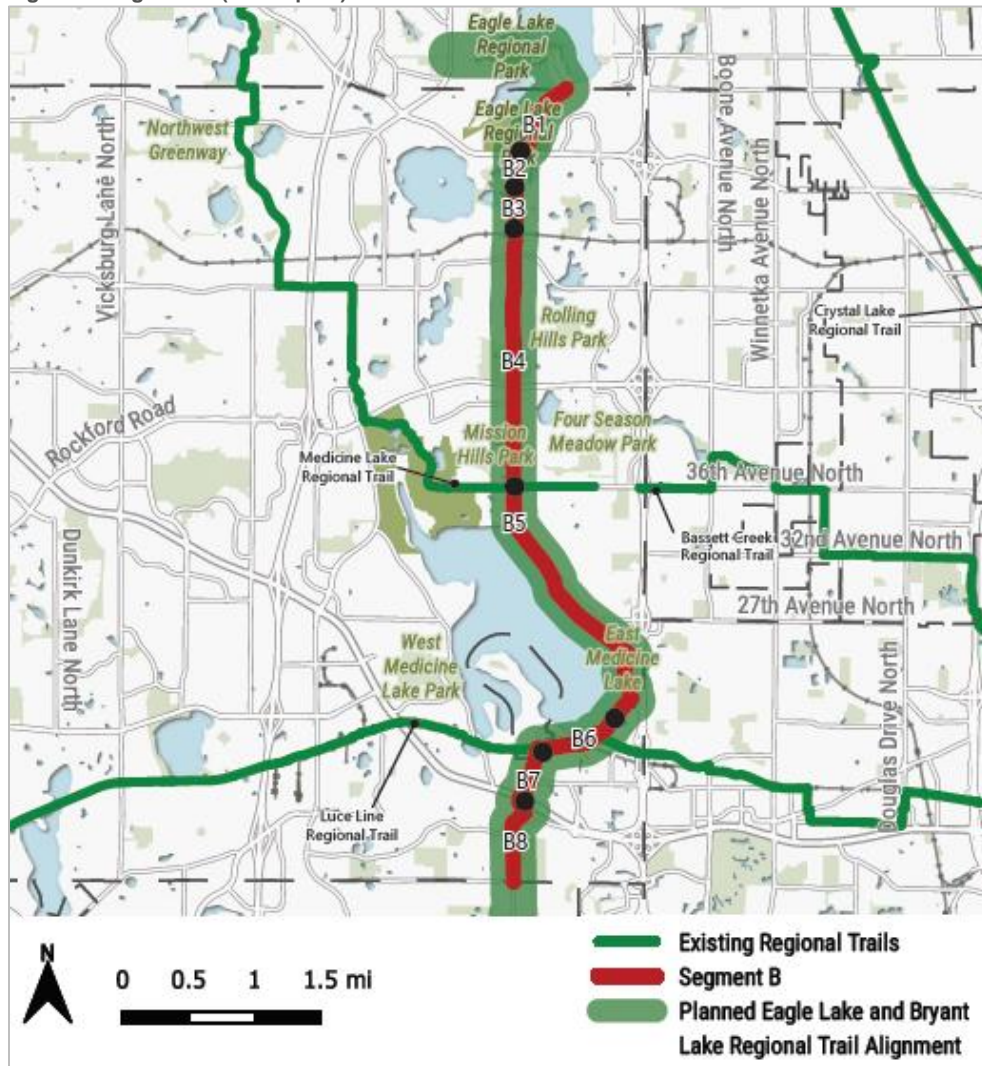


Segment B

Segment B is 7.1 miles long and is located entirely within the City of Plymouth (Figure 5). Segment B stretches from the northern border of the City of Plymouth at Eagle Lake Drive to the southern border of Plymouth at Ridgemount Avenue. Segment B directly connects with three existing regional trails - the Bassett Creek, Medicine Lake, and Luce Line regional trails - and will connect to municipal trails when feasible. Segment B consists of 5.9 miles of existing trails and 1.2 miles of planned trails.

- Subsegment B1 is an existing trail located on Park District property within the Eagle Lake Regional Park. Upgrades are recommended in this subsegment as opportunities arise, including center line striping.
- Subsegment B2 is an existing trail that runs along the west side of Zachary Lane between Bass Lake Road and the eastern entrance to Timber Shores Park. Short-term upgrades are recommended as opportunities arise, including signage, patching, sealcoating, improved driveway aprons, and tactile paving. Long term, this subsegment is recommended to be fully reconstructed, which is reflected in the cost estimate.
- Subsegment B3 is planned. Signage is recommended to help mitigate potential conflicts between trail users where the trail meets with an existing City of Plymouth trail.
- Subsegment B4 is existing. In the near term, upgrades are recommended as opportunities arise, including signage, patching, sealcoating, improved driveway aprons, and tactile paving. Long term, this subsegment is recommended to be fully reconstructed, which is reflected in the cost estimate.
- Subsegment B5 shares the same alignment as the existing Medicine Lake Regional Trail. Improvements are outlined in the master plan which is in the process of being updated.
- Subsegment B6 shares the same alignment as the existing Luce Line Regional Trail. The existing trail already meets Park District trail design standards and therefore requires minimal investment.
- Subsegment B7 is planned. A small part of the subsegment along South Shore Drive would require a property easement or right-of-way acquisition to build the trail. Private property will only be acquired through a willing-seller approach.
- Subsegment B8 is planned. According to the Park District, there are a number of potential developments that could influence the recommendation for the future trail route in this subsegment. Considerations include a potential all-day bus service or bus rapid transit route along Highway 55 between Plymouth and Minneapolis. If implemented, a future stop would likely be located at County Road 73 and may include a new grade-separated crossing of Highway 55 for pedestrians and bicyclists. If a grade-separated crossing is developed, the Park District would consider rerouting the trail to use the grade separated crossing and improve safety for trail users. The Park District considers the trail route flexible along Sunset Boulevard and across Highway 55, and would be a partner in future development regardless of the outcome.

Figure 5: Segment B (MP Map 10)

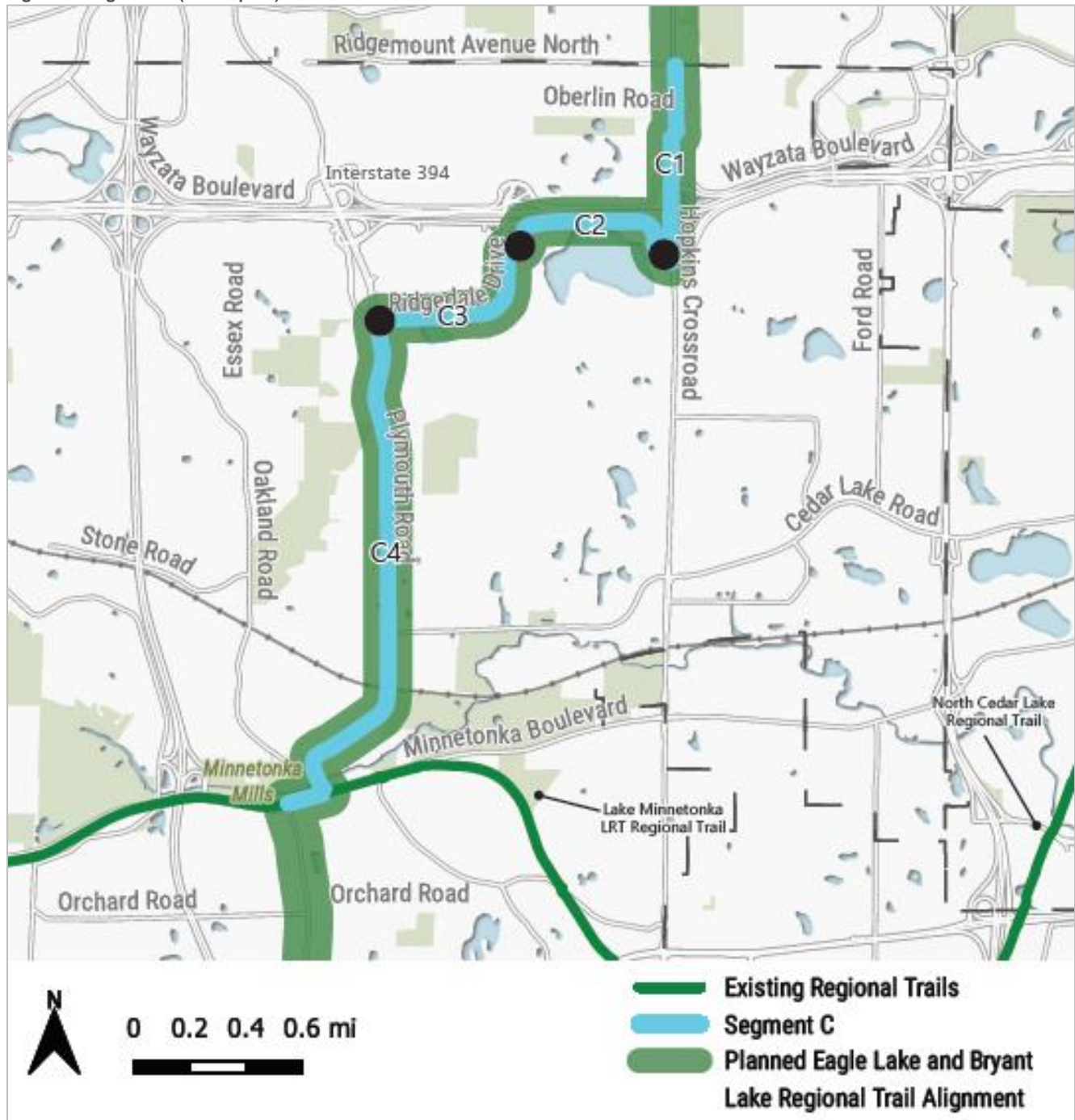


Segment C

Segment C is 4.1 miles (Figure 6) and is located entirely within the City of Minnetonka. Segment C stretches from the northern border of the City of Minnetonka at Ridgemount Avenue to the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail. Segment C connects with the Lake Minnetonka LRT and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT regional trails, and will connect with existing and future municipal trails when feasible. Segment C consists of 3.4 miles of existing trails and 0.7 miles of planned trails.

- A preliminary design concept was developed for Subsegment C1 (page 51) to identify the potential trail alignment, boulevard width, and other design details. The concept shown is preliminary and further design and analysis is necessary prior to implementation.
- In Subsegment C2, the existing trail will need center line striping. Long-term upgrades include reconstruction to meet the Park District’s standard width (i.e., 10 feet) requirements.
- In Subsegment C3, little maintenance or upgrades are required for the trail in the short term, due to the recent construction of the trail in this area.
- In Subsegment C4, recommended upgrades include reconstruction of the trail at the end of useful life and improved pedestrian ramps and access on both sides of Minnetonka Boulevard. Short-term upgrades are recommended as opportunities arise, including center line striping, signage, patching, and sealcoating.

Figure 6: Segment C (MP Map 19)



Bryant Lake Trail Segment

The Bryant Lake trail segment is 4.7 miles long, stretching from Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail in Minnetonka and traveling south to Bryant Lake Regional Park in Eden Prairie. The Bryant Lake trail route is divided into two segments, which were defined based on municipal boundaries and the intersections with existing regional trails and parks. Each segment is further divided into subsegments.

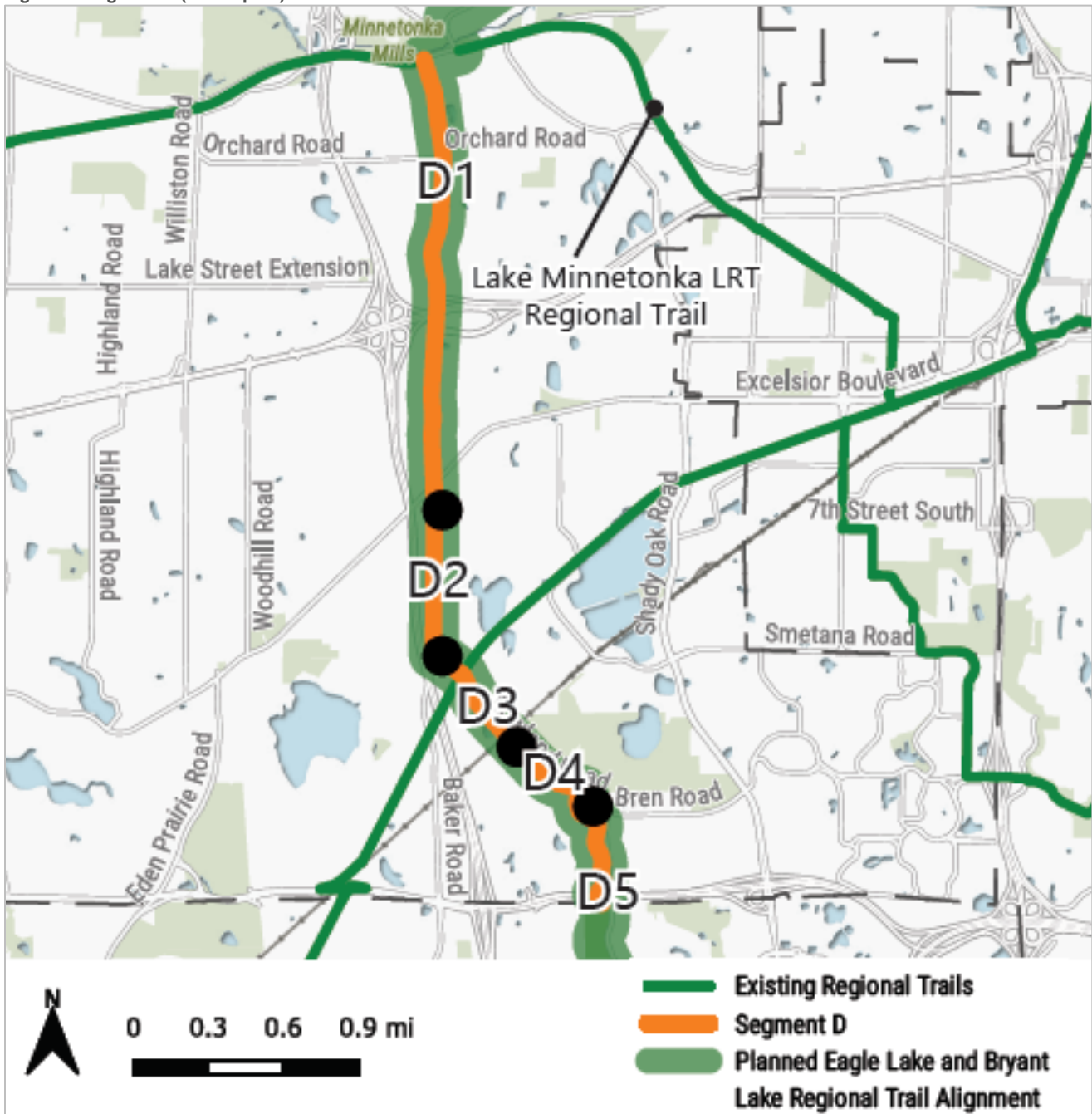
Segment D

Segment D is 3.7 miles and is located entirely within the City of Minnetonka. Segment D stretches from Minnetonka Boulevard to the southern border of Minnetonka at Highway 62 and connects with two existing regional trails – Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail and Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail - and will connect to existing and future municipal trails when feasible. Segment D consists of 0.6 miles of existing trails and 3.1 miles of planned trails (Figure 7).

- Subsegment D1 is a planned 10-foot trail along the west side of Baker Road/County Road 60 that begins at the intersection of Minnetonka Boulevard and ends at the intersection of Excelsior Boulevard. This subsegment included significant analysis and community engagement during the planning process to determine the recommended side of Baker Road for the trail alignment. A preliminary design concept was developed for Subsegment D1 to identify the potential trail route, boulevard width, and other design details. The concept is preliminary and further design and analysis is necessary prior to implementation.
- Subsegment D2 is a planned 10-foot trail along the east side of Baker Road/County Road 60 that begins at the intersection of Excelsior Boulevard and ends at the intersection of Rowland Road. This subsegment included significant analysis and community engagement during the planning process to determine the recommended side of Baker Road for the trail alignment. A preliminary design concept was developed for Subsegment D2 to identify the potential trail alignment, boulevard width, and other design details. The concept is preliminary and further design and analysis are necessary prior to implementation, especially at the intersection. If additional study reveals a need or opportunity to improve intersection safety, the Park District would be interested in a grade-separated crossing.
- Subsegment D3 is a short, planned trail segment located on the north side of Rowland Road between Baker Road and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail. A preliminary design concept was developed for the subsegment to identify the potential trail alignment, boulevard width, and other design details. The concept shown is preliminary and further design and analysis is necessary prior to implementation.
- Subsegment D4 is an existing trail that runs along the north side of Rowland Road between the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and the south entrance to the City of Minnetonka's Lone Lake Park. Short-term upgrades are recommended as opportunities arise, such as signage, trailhead amenities, patching, sealcoating, improved driveway aprons, and tactile paving. Long-term, the trail is recommended to be fully reconstructed at a 10-foot width with a grass boulevard between the trail and the road.
- Subsegment D5 is a planned trail segment that is located on the north side of Rowland Road adjacent to the southern border of Lone Lake Park. It then crosses underneath Rowland Road, connecting to an existing trail near the north entry of Bryant Lake Regional Park. Further analysis and design regarding geometrics of existing trails, future regional trail and future local trail is necessary prior to determining the recommended trail route in this subsegment. It is

recommended that the existing gravel trail portion of Subsegment D5 between Rowland Road and Highway 62 be paved.

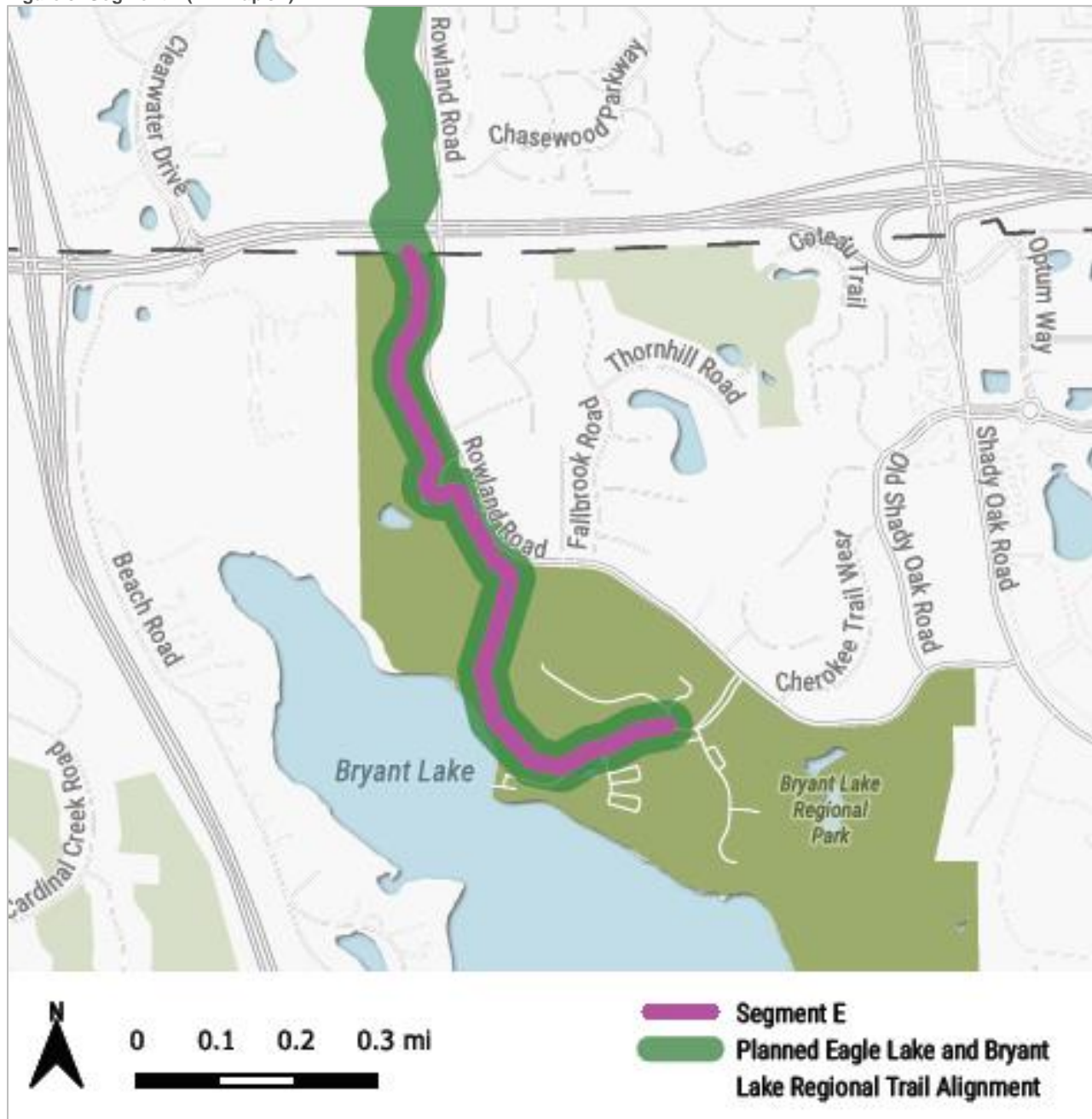
Figure 7: Segment D (MP Map 25)



Segment E

Segment E is 1 mile of existing trail and is located entirely within the City of Eden Prairie. The entire portion of Segment E is located on Park District property within Bryant Lake Regional Park (Figure 8). Segment E starts at Highway 62 at the border of Eden Prairie and Minnetonka and meanders through a wooded area in Bryant Lake Regional Park. It connects directly to the Bryant Lake Dog Park and ends near the parking lot at the Bryant Lake Playground. Although Park District investments for Segment E are minimal, a trailhead kiosk will be required near the playground and parking lot area since it will be the trail terminus.

Figure 8: Segment E (MP Map 31)



Conflicts

Some Baker Road residents expressed opposition to the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan at the end of the 30-day public comment period. The Park District began engagement of Minnetonka

residents and staff in the fall of 2017 during the WMRT Study. At this time, the Park District learned that the section of Baker Road between Minnetonka Boulevard and Rowland Road was a priority for the residents and City of Minnetonka. As such, Baker Road was chosen as the preferred regional trail corridor; however, the side of the road was not determined at this time as additional study was required to better understand opportunities and challenges of the corridor.

The Park District invited Baker Road residents to provide additional input and share their concerns via an in-person meeting at Bryant Lake Regional Park pavilion, one-on-one virtual meetings, and extending the comment period. A total of 14 Baker Road residents participated.

The feedback from the Baker Road residents will influence the design and construction phase of the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail project and the engagement process of all future phases. Although the Park District could not fulfill every request from the 14 Baker Road residents, many left with a better understanding of the project and a commitment to work together during the next phases. After seeing the compiled feedback and hearing from two Baker Road residents at the Minnetonka City Council meeting on July 26, 2021, the Park District also agreed to include language in the shared cooperative trail agreement around working with residents along Baker Road to minimize disruption and reach a mutually beneficial solution at the request of the Minnetonka City Council.

Public Services

Throughout the master plan process, the Park District worked closely with local communities to route the trail in a manner that has the greatest public benefit and least amount of private property impacts. The plan identifies many trail amenities and features that would increase accessibility, awareness, safety, and natural resources management along the regional trail corridor. Recommendations include:

- Improve trail/road crossings by maintaining a clear sight line and careful attention to detail for a safe and user-friendly crossing using industry best standards.
- Incorporate bridges, boardwalks, and other creative solutions to minimize potential natural resources impacts while maintaining a contiguous and continuous trail corridor.
- Stormwater will sheet flow over the trail pavement and onto adjacent urban roadways, where it will be collected and conveyed by the roadway stormwater drainage system. In areas where the regional trail is on an independent route, such as parks, green spaces, or rural road segments, alternative stormwater best management practices, such as rain gardens and infiltration swales, may be explored during the design phase.
- The regional trail will incorporate traffic control signs and devices, such as trail stop or yield signs and center line pavement markings.
- Regional trail wayfinding signage provides trail users with orientation and location information for amenities and services. Wayfinding signage typically provides:
 - Overview map of the agency partner's regional trail system and the specific regional trail.
 - Directions and distances to major destinations and points of interest.
 - Directions for long-term detours or interim routes.
 - Location information for nearby amenities such as local parks and local trails.
 - Location information for nearby services, such as drinking water, public restrooms and public parking.
 - Visual identification of the regional trail network through physical kiosk/signage structures.
 - Three types of wayfinding signage structures:
 - System Kiosks
 - Regional Trail Kiosks

- Directional Signage

- Rest stops are generally located every mile often in conjunction with kiosks and other signage.
- Installing bicycle repair stations, which provide tools necessary to perform basic bike repairs and maintenance - from changing a flat to adjusting brakes and derailleurs.
- The Park District encourages users to respect each other through a “Share the Trail” safety campaign.
- Kiosks provide ADA information including trail access information, including length, surface type, typical trail width, minimum clearance width, typical grade, maximum grade, typical cross slope, and maximum cross slope.

Operations

The Park District Ordinance specifies rules and regulations in order to provide for the safe and peaceful public use of Park District areas and facilities; for the educational and recreational benefit and enjoyment of the public; for the protection and preservation of the property, facilities and natural resources of the Park District; and for the safety and general welfare of the public.

Regional trails are open to the public year-round, from 5 AM to 10 PM. Regional trail staffing levels fluctuate to account for seasonal use patterns, maintenance requirements and available funding. The Park District’s present policy provides for the operation and maintenance of regional trails from April 1 to November 15 and typically does not plow or otherwise maintain regional trails during the winter season (November 16 - March 31). Local communities may elect to operate and maintain the regional trail segment during the winter season through a winter use permit. The Park District currently reimburses local communities a proportion of the total winter maintenance cost based on a per mile calculation.

Partner Engagement

The Park District completed the WMRT Study in partnership with representatives from partnering cities including Plymouth, Minnetonka, Eden Prairie, and Maple Grove. Other partners were engaged on an as-needed basis, including MnDOT, the Hennepin County Bike and Pedestrian Division, and the Hennepin County Bicycle Advisory Committee.

From fall 2017 to summer 2018, the intent of engagement was to gather preliminary feedback on potential north-south regional trails, including the public’s interest, priorities, and concerns in this corridor. The feedback obtained during this phase was the source of the project principles and routes.

The project team facilitated nine in-person activities and several online tools to gather feedback. Over 2,700 people were reached through these methods while over 700 people provided comments. The bulk of in-person engagement activities occurred during this phase, allowing for a “collaborate/involve” approach. Various engagement tools were deployed to present and collect input from the public and stakeholder groups.

The Park District begins a variety of community engagement activities to explore community sentiment and preferences around trail projects, which are taken into the middle of 2018.

- Online tools, including survey and online mapping tool.
- 12 in-person engagement events.

The draft master plan was also shared with agency stakeholders including local cities, Hennepin County, MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council. This review is primarily conducted at the staff level and the suggested revisions were addressed. The Park District is committed to coordinate with MnDOT and other key stakeholders on future improvements on highway network crossings and the regional trail alignment.

Public Engagement and Participation

The overall engagement goal for the project was to be collaborative with as many stakeholder groups as possible. The design team and Park District staff worked directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that perspectives were consistently understood, considered, and reflected in project decisions. Online, virtual and in-person engagement tools were utilized to safely conduct engagement efforts during a pandemic as some in-person events were canceled due to the pandemic.

Based on the input gathered through the WMRT Study, the Park District developed preliminary preferences for the master plan routes:

- Provide park-like settings for the trails, with connection to destinations.
- Connect to the following key destinations: parks, green space and nature areas, and shopping and entertainment options.

These ideas were reviewed and revised during master plan-specific public engagement, beginning in the summer of 2020 and continuing through plan completion. Plan-specific engagement further connected with adjacent neighbors and underrepresented groups to:

- Understand needs or concerns about the preliminary route.
- Determine conceptual design and potential private property impacts.
- Incorporate feedback and recommendations from underrepresented groups.
- Ensure public and political support.
- Finalize the route.

The engagement with the adjacent neighbors and underrepresented groups had several common themes in the development of the Eagle-Bryant Regional Trail.

- Support for the north-south regional trails in the corridor.
- Provide park-like settings for trails.
- Connect local and regional destinations.
- Enhance crossings for pedestrian safety at busy intersections along the route.
- Lack of awareness of offerings, including regional trails.
- Make wayfinding along regional trails more user friendly.
- Increase/improve amenities along trails.
- Provide a variety of experiences along trails.
- Encourage more positive interactions between different types of trail users.
- Concern over loss of privacy and vegetation along Baker Road.
- Better engagement processes during planning efforts impacting adjacent neighbors/neighborhoods.

The Park District released Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan for a 30-day public comment period in late May 2021, and then extended the comment period to mid-July. An open house event for property owners adjacent to Baker Road in Minnetonka was also held, as preliminary comments indicated that these neighbors had additional questions and concerns related to potential private property impacts. These and other concerns will be more thoroughly addressed during the Design Phase to work to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts.

Overall, feedback confirmed that the planning process and recommendations were moving in the right direction. A diverse cross-section of community groups were very supportive of the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan project.

Equity Analysis

Project Data

The Park District's engagement process focused on residents within the three-mile travelshed of the proposed Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail during the master plan process. Data from the 2010 Census and 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) found the majority of residents within the regional trail service area are adults who are white and have household incomes between \$50,000 and \$149,000. However, Census and ACS data do not tell the whole story. The corridor continues to diversify in income, race, ethnicity, and age due to a variety of factors, such as the development of affordable housing and public transportation.

Underrepresented groups along the trail corridor include people of color, females, households with annual incomes under \$75,000, and people under the age of 17 and over the age of 60. Additionally, people who do not speak English or speak English as a second language are likely underrepresented on regional trails.

Through conversation with Park District staff, city staff, and residents, the Park District learned the following groups would be served by these trails moving forward:

- Households with annual incomes less than \$75,000: Affordable housing already exists along the route, there are several buildings with a designated amount of affordable housing units being developed
- People under the age of 17: City staff and residents noted that school-aged youth would use several sections of the regional trail near local schools along the route
- Seniors: One of the biggest demographic shifts affecting this corridor is the aging of the resident base, specifically adult households ages 60 and older. There are several senior living facilities along the route.
- Those who do not speak English or speak English as a second language: The number of community members who speak different languages is growing in Hennepin County. The most common languages are Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. Adjacent to the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail is the Sun Valley Mobile Home Park, largely a Spanish-speaking community.
- Black, Indigenous, People of Color: While the corridor is currently predominately made up of white households, it is anticipated to diversify in income, race, ethnicity, and age due to a variety of factors, such as the development of affordable housing, equitable housing initiatives (e.g., the Just Deeds project), and public transit.
- Adjacent neighbors/neighborhoods: Residents along the route who will be particularly impacted by the project are Baker Road, South Shore Drive and County Road 73 residents since there is not an existing trail along these roads.

The master plan recognizes the impacts past decisions have had on the present-day inequitable outcomes experienced in this region. An example of this is the historic segregation in housing and, therefore, access to park and recreation facilities in the Twin Cities area, including suburban Hennepin County. Both low-income communities and communities of color have not had the same type of access to housing throughout the corridor. Mostly due to zoning ordinances, which restrict types of housing that vary from single family homes, in addition to racially restrictive covenants on single family homes. These practices kept some communities from residing in sections of the Twin Cities metro area, including within this corridor, and accessing park and recreation amenities.

However, housing options are expanding while several cities, including Plymouth and Minnetonka, are working on reaching equitable housing outcomes by joining the Just Deeds Project. The Park District is

working closely with cities to ensure this increases access to park amenities and park planning to people from underrepresented groups.

Public Engagement and Participation

The Park District was interested in a genuine, inclusive, and innovative process that allowed stakeholders to explore options and issues identified by the Park District while contributing their own insights regarding the corridor and regional trails system. Alternative venues for community engagement were explored to try and capture feedback from the general public, affected residents and underrepresented community groups. The following outreach were conducted:

- Virtual listening session with senior women’s Nordic walking groups.
- Bike tours at the Hispanic Heritage Celebration to share information with the Latino/x community. The approach was not as successful due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Park District couldn’t physically be where people were during much of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many people were no longer congregating in public spaces, the Park District put up yard signs in strategic locations to engage the communities along the proposed route. Key locations included:
 - Transit Stations
 - Affordable Apartment Complexes
 - Baker Road
 - Sun Valley Mobile Home Park
- Four virtual open houses were held for communities to learn about the project, provide their insight, and ask clarifying questions as to how the trail would look or function in the ir community.

The open houses were targeted in the following ways:

- Two virtual open houses were held for Baker Road and Minnetonka residents.
- One virtual open house was held for County Road 73 and South Shore residents.
- One virtual open house was held for the general public interested in the project.
- One in-person open house was held for Baker Road residents who wanted to learn more information and share their concerns about the adjacency of the trail to their homes.

The Park District had planned to engage these targeted groups: a women of color camping retreat in partnership with the community engagement team; a pop-up bike clinic event at Sun Valley Mobile Home Park focused on Latino/x residents and residents with lower annual household incomes; an event with Outdoor Afro to engage the Black community around this project with the community engagement team. These events were canceled as a result of the pandemic.

Evaluation Summary

The Park District will continue to develop more programs and facilities that serve everyone, including but not limited to underrepresented communities. There are many challenges and obstacles to overcome when establishing equal, equitable, and inclusive outdoor recreation opportunities, such as unforeseen pandemics impacting outreach efforts with targeted groups. The Park District is pursuing - and will continue to explore - new ways of mitigating these challenges through engagement, policy integration, accountability, and partnerships, to achieve comprehensive, long-lasting, and sustainable solutions and positive outcomes.

In addition to the better outcomes that will result in the next phases of the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan project, the planning effort will also result in better outcomes regarding processes for all planning efforts moving forward. The following are two examples for how this planning effort will impact processes moving forward:

- Employing engagement ideas provided by adjacent neighbors to better reach those impacted by a master plan project, including using letters, providing in-person engagement opportunities, and identifying who will be directly impacted on engagement materials sent to adjacent neighbors/neighborhoods.
- Engaging all underrepresented communities, but particularly the BIPOC community, early and often in the process, especially since the project experienced several canceled events due to the pandemic, leading to a lack of feedback from these communities around this specific project.

Public Awareness

The Marketing and Community Engagement Department manages a centralized marketing communications function that oversees the Park District's website, public relations, marketing, media relations, social media, brand management, event planning and promotion. Several effective marketing and outreach tools are used to promote the Park District, including but not limited to events calendars, maps, digital and social media, direct mail, press releases, a centralized reservation system, brochures, advertising and on-site promotion.

The Park District collaborates with a wide array of community, business and government organizations to promote its facilities, programs and services, and to educate the public about its resources. The Park District also works with the Metropolitan Council Regional Parks System, the State Office of Tourism and other partners to leverage shared opportunities for creating awareness and visibility. Trail information is advertised on the Park District's website, including trail maps, mileage, access points, parking, stories, and types of trails. Additionally, a focus is placed on developing partnerships and programming opportunities that allow the Park District to better serve all residents of Suburban Hennepin County, especially those with less access to its facilities and programs.

Accessibility

The Park District is committed to providing access and recreational opportunities to all people, including persons with disabilities, BIPOC communities and other special-population groups. The Park District meets this commitment by appropriately designing facilities, considering programming and actively addressing potential barriers to participation.

All regional trail facilities, including associated trailheads and trail amenities, will be designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities and developed in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and guidelines. In addition to accommodating individuals with disabilities, these trails pass through numerous cities, providing access to people with a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds and connecting those persons with important local community destinations such as parks, commercial areas, community facilities, cultural destinations, and transit facilities.

On a broader scale, communities adjacent to the trail will not only have access to the Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail, but also gain direct and indirect access to several existing regional parks, regional and state trails, and local parks and trails. To improve local access, neighborhood trail connections are anticipated at regular intervals. The Park District does not charge entrance fees for its regional trails; therefore, the regional trails are available for all users to enjoy regardless of financial status.

Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area

The Eagle-Bryant Lake Regional Trail does not impact the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area.

Consistency with Other Council Policies and Systems

Community Development – Forecasts (Todd Graham, 651-602-1322) – The Park District considers park visitation estimates and connects that to region-level diversity of the future population. Further, the Park District discusses expected changing trail user needs. Council staff concur with this demand assessment.

Community Development – Housing (Ashleigh Johnson 651-602-1106) – The master plan is consistent with the Council's *2040 Housing Policy Plan*. There are at least five affordable housing properties within 0.5 mile of the planned trail. Housing, or connecting to existing housing developments, was not explicitly mentioned in the plan. However, residents within 1.5 miles of the planned trail were sent informational postcards, and there were many virtual and pop-up engagement opportunities for nearby residents to interact with.

Environmental Services – Sewers (Roger Janzig, 651-602-1119) – Given the length and location of the proposed trail, the construction of any new or updating of existing paths, trails, bridges, or any other construction project may have an impact on multiple Metropolitan Council Interceptors in multiple locations. To assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system; prior to initiating any project, preliminary plans should be sent to Tim Wedin, Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager (651-602-4571) at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services.

Environmental Services – Water Resources (Joe Mulcahy, 612-913-8864) – In the future Design-Development & Construction phase, the Park District will need to address stormwater management and any wetland impacts from the proposed trail. Stormwater management requirements will likely include compliance with provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination system (NPDES) Construction Stormwater General Permit.

Transportation – Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (Steve Elmer, 651-602-1756) - Given its relevance to regional bicycle planning and potential federal transportation funding for trail construction, it would be advantageous to incorporate language and map elements that describe and reference the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN). This could be most easily accomplished by inserting the RBTN route layers into existing maps #1, #5, and #24 – or by inserting companion maps to those existing numbered maps – that depict the planned regional trail alignments with their connections to and overlaps with the designated RBTN tiered alignments and corridors.

**CITY OF EDEN PRAIRIE
HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-57

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE EAGLE LAKE & BRYANT LAKE
REGIONAL TRAILS**

WHEREAS, The City of Eden Prairie (City) recognizes the Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake Regional Trails (ELBLRT) as an important component of the regional parks system providing a desirable recreational and non-motorized transportation amenity to the residents of the City and the region; and

WHEREAS, The ELBLRT will provide safe, off-street non-motorized access to existing regional recreation amenities including Eagle Lake Regional Park, Medicine Lake Regional Trail, Bassett Creek Regional Trail, French Regional Park, Luce Line Regional Trail, Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail, Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and Bryant Lake Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, The City recognizes that Three Rivers Park District (Park District) and the directly affected cities, have gathered significant public input in the development of the ELBLRT Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, The City recognizes that the Park District has drafted the ELBLRT Master Plan and accepted and responded to public comments appropriately; and

WHEREAS, The ELBLRT Master Plan is consistent with other approved local and regional plans; and

WHEREAS, The City supports the acquisition, design, implementation, and operation of the ELBLRT pursuant to the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, The City intends to enter into a regional trail cooperative agreement, if warranted, with the Park District formally outlining the acquisition, design, implementation, and operation responsibilities of the ELBLRT.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Eden Prairie City Council supports the ELBLRT Master Plan.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Eden Prairie this 13th day of July 2021.



Ronald A. Case, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathleen Porta, City Clerk

Resolution No. 2021-067

Resolution approving the Three Rivers Park District Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota as follows:

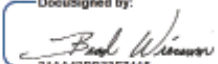
Section 1. Background.

- 1.01. The city of Minnetonka (city) recognizes the Three Rivers Park District (Park District) Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake Regional Trails (ELBLRT) as an important component of the regional parks system providing a desirable recreational and non-motorized transportation amenity to the residents of the city and the region.
- 1.02. The ELBLRT will provide safe, off-street non-motorized access to existing regional recreation amenities including Eagle Lake Regional Park, Medicine Lake Regional Trail, Bassett Creek Regional Trail, French Regional Park, Luce Line Regional Trail, Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail, Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and Bryant Lake Regional Park.
- 1.03. The city recognizes that Three Rivers Park District and the directly affected cities, have gathered significant public input in the development of the ELBLRT Master Plan.
- 1.04. The city recognizes that the Park District has drafted the ELBLRT Master Plan and accepted and responded to public comments appropriately.
- 1.05. The ELBLRT Master Plan is consistent with other approved local and regional plans.

Section 2. Council Action.

- 2.01. The city supports the acquisition, design, implementation, and operation of the ELBLRT pursuant to the Master Plan.
- 2.02. The city intends to enter into a regional trail cooperative agreement, if warranted, with the Park District formally outlining the acquisition, design, implementation, and operation responsibilities of the ELBLRT.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota, on July 26, 2021.

DocuSigned by:

21AA62DB33F7415...
Brad Wiersum, Mayor

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

C8FF00054C54E1...
Becky Koosman, City Clerk

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

RESOLUTION No. 2021-233

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EAGLE TO BRYANT LAKE
REGIONAL TRAIL MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) has three regional trails in Plymouth; Luce Line, Medicine Lake and Bassett Creek; and

WHEREAS, City staff have been collaborating with TRPD staff to address gaps in regional trail networks while improving access to local and regional trails; and

WHEREAS, one outcome of the study identified the Eagle to Bryant Lake Regional Trail; and

WHEREAS, staff from TRPD shared a presentation about the master plan and alignment at the June 9, 2020 City Council meeting and the September 10, 2020 and February 11, 2021 Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission meetings; and

WHEREAS, approving the Master Plan will allow TRPD to seek funding sources for the future regional trail. TRPD will enter into an agreement with the city to transfer ownership of all city trails along the new regional trail to TRPD. TRPD will then take over all maintenance and replacement responsibilities of the trails; and

WHEREAS, staff is in favor of the proposed alignment and supports the master plan for the future regional trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PLYMOUTH, MINNESOTA, that the City Council approves the Eagle to Bryant Lake Regional Trail Master Plan.

APPROVED by the City Council on this 24th day of August, 2021.

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF HENNEPIN) SS.

The undersigned, being the duly qualified and appointed Deputy City Manager of the City of Plymouth, Minnesota, certifies that I compared the foregoing resolution adopted at a meeting of the Plymouth City Council on August 24, 2021 with the original thereof on file in my office, and the same is a correct transcription thereof.

WITNESS my hand officially as such Deputy City Manager and the Corporate seal of the City this
16th day of September, 2021.


Deputy City Manager



Metropolitan District
1500 County Road B-2 West
Roseville, MN 55113

May 11, 2021

Maggie Heurung
Associate Planner
Three Rivers Park District

SUBJECT: Three Rivers Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake Master Plan
MnDOT Review #CPA21-002
Between Bryant and Eagle Lake Parks
Control Section: 2789
Plymouth/Minnetonka, Hennepin County

Dear Maggie Heurung,

Thank you for submitting the draft master plan for Eagle Lake and Bryant Lake Regional Trails. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has reviewed the document, received 5/3/21, and has the following comments:

Pedestrian/Bicycle

MnDOT supports the development of these regional trails. We look forward to continued coordination on how to improve crossings of MnDOT's trunk highway network to benefit bicycle and pedestrian safety and transportation.

Please contact Jesse Thorsen, MnDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning, at 651-234-7788 or jesse.thorsen@state.mn.us with any questions.

Area Management

Existing trail passes under bridges 27573 and 27572 on MN 62, which are due for replacement within the next 10 years.

Please contact Andrew Lutaya, Area Engineer, at 651-775-0855 or Andrew.lutaya@state.mn.us with any questions.

Transit

Coordination with Metro Transit will be needed to mitigate impacts to the bus stop and shelter at I-394 and Hopkins Crossroad, and any other bus stops along the route that may be affected.

Please contact Jason Junge at 651-234-7878, or jason.junge@state.mn.us with any questions.

Permits

Any work that affects MnDOT right-of-way will require an appropriate permit. All permits are available and should be submitted at: <https://olpa.dot.state.mn.us/OLPA/>. Please upload a copy of this letter when applying for any permits.

An equal opportunity employer

For questions regarding permit submittal requirements, please contact Buck Craig of MnDOT's Metro District Permits Section at 651-775-0405 (cell) or buck.craig@state.mn.us.

Review Submittal Options

As plans are further refined, please send any plans that may directly or indirectly impact the operation of MnDOT's system to the below email address. MnDOT's goal is to complete reviews within 30 calendar days. In order of preference, review materials may be submitted as:

1. Email documents and plans in PDF format to metrodevreviews.dot@state.mn.us. Attachments may not exceed 20 megabytes per email. Documents can be zipped as well. If multiple emails are necessary, number each message.
2. For files over 20 megabytes, upload the PDF file(s) to MnDOT's web transfer client site at: <https://mft.dot.state.mn.us>. Contact MnDOT Planning development review staff at metrodevreviews.dot@state.mn.us for uploading instructions, and send an email listing the file name(s) after the document(s) has/have been uploaded.
3. A flash drive or hard copy can be sent to the address below. Please notify development review staff via the above email if this submittal method is used.

MnDOT
 Metro District Planning Section
 Development Reviews Coordinator
 1500 West County Road B-2
 Roseville, MN 55113

Please do not submit files via a cloud service or SharePoint link.

You are welcome to contact me at 651-234-7792, or david.kratz@state.mn.us with any questions.

Sincerely,

 Digitally signed
 by David Kratz
 Date: 2021.05.11
 16:56:44 -05'00'

David Kratz
Senior Planner

Copy sent via email:

Jason Swenson, Water Resources
 Buck Craig, Permits
 Doug Nelsen, Right of Way
 Eric Lauer-Hunt, Traffic
 Jason Junge, Transit
 Aaron Tag, Area Engineer
 Andrew Lutaya, Area Engineer

Mackenzie Turner Barger, Ped/Bike
 Jesse Thorsen, Ped/Bike
 Lance Schowalter, Design
 Cameron Muhic, Planning
 Tod Sherman, Planning
 Russell Owen, Metropolitan Council